REMARKS

Claims 15-24 and 26-36 are pending in this application. By this Amendment, Applicants amend Claim 15 and 16, cancel claims 1-14 and 25, and add claims 35 and 36.

Claim 26 was objected to for being dependent upon a non-elected claim. Applicants have amended claim 26 to be dependent upon only elected claims. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this objection.

Claims 15-24 and 27-34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 101 based on the Examiner's allegation that the claimed invention is directed to an image processing method, which merely manipulates data and is an abstract idea, which is non-statutory subject matter. Applicants have amended method claims 15 and 16 to recite a post-computer process activity and a pre-computer process activity, e.g. "displaying said display object on the display screen" and "modeling a living creature as a display object in virtual three-dimensional space". Regarding claims 17, 20, 23, 24, 27, 28 and 31, all of these claims are directed to an image processing device, and are therefore not directed to an image processing method. Further, all of claims 17, 20, 23, 24, 27, 28 and 31 include tangible structural features which are clearly statutory subject matter. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection.

Claims 16-24 and 27-34 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as being anticipated by Asai et al. (U.S. 5,779,548). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection.

Applicants submit herewith a Declaration under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) which states that Asai et al. (U.S. 5,779,548) and the present invention were commonly owned at the time the inventions were made. Therefore, Asai et al. is not a proper reference under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e). Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 16-24 and 27-34 are allowable over the prior art.

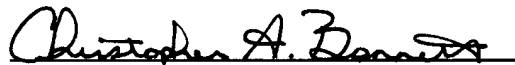In view of the foregoing Amendments to the Claims and Remarks, Applicants

respectfully submit that Claim 15-25 and 26-34 are allowable over the prior art for the reasons described above.

In view of the foregoing Amendments and Remarks, Applicant respectfully submits that this Application is in condition for allowance. Favorable consideration and prompt allowance are respectfully solicited.

The Commissioner is authorized to charge any shortage in fees due in connection with the filing of this paper, including extension of time fees, to Deposit Account No. 50-1353.

Respectfully submitted,

Date: June 5, 2001

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VERSION WITH MARKINGS TO SHOW CHANGES MADE

15. An image processing method in which a display object modeled on a living creature in virtual three-dimensional space is displayed on a display screen, as the perspective is changed from a given point of view, wherein said image processing method is characterized by the steps of:

modeling a living creature as a display object in virtual three-dimensional space;

comparing the position of an imaginary point determined in said virtual space and the position of said display object;

determining whether or not the results of said comparison match certain conditions set by a program; [and]

establishing said imaginary point as the main point of view of said display object when the results of said match said certain conditions; and

displaying said display object on the display screen.

16. An image processing method in which a display object modeled on a living creature in virtual three-dimensional space is displayed on a display screen, as the perspective is changed from a given point of view, wherein said image processing method is characterized by the steps of:

modeling a living creature as a display object in virtual three-dimensional space;

comparing the position of a plurality of imaginary points determined in said virtual space and the position of said display object; [and]

selecting said imaginary point as the point of view of said display object; and

displaying said display object on said display screen.

26. Data recording media [on which has been recorded] including a program [for allowing] to enable a computer system to function as an image processing device according to any of Claims [1 through 5, 8, 9, 12, 13, and] 17 through [25] 24.